

Intangible Cultural Heritage Update

News and updates
on Newfoundland and
Labrador's Intangible
Cultural Heritage Program

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What Is ICH? Booklet

The colourful image of Patsy's wool socks for sale in Trout River by photographer John MacDermid graces the cover of our new "What is ICH?" booklet, released this month. The booklet gives a brief overview of intangible cultural heritage, and outlines the four goals identified in the province's ICH strategy for safeguarding our living heritage:

1. Documenting ICH and living traditions;
2. Recognizing and celebrating ICH;
3. Supporting and encouraging the passing on of knowledge and skills; and,
4. Exploring the potential of ICH as a resource for community development.

Copies are available by phoning 1-888-739-1892 ext 2
or by emailing Dale Jarvis at ich@heritagefoundation.ca

Rug Hooking at the Labrador Creative Arts Festival

The 2008 Labrador Creative Arts Festival ran from November 19-25, and featured artists from across Canada, including Vickie Walsh, a Newfoundland artist based on the Southern Shore. For several years she has taught rug hooking through school ArtSmarts programs and at community centers. Here, she talks about the traditional craft to an audience in Happy Valley.



Planning Cultural Documentation Projects

Dr. David Taylor from the American Folklife Center gives a practical workshop on how to develop plans for ICH projects

On Monday, November 3, Dr. David A. Taylor of the American Folklife Center at the Library of Congress, gave a practical, three-hour workshop on how to develop plans for cultural documentation projects at The Lantern on Barnes Road, St. John's.

Taylor took participants through the process of planning a project, addressing such factors as the identification of its goals, primary focus, financial requirements, and

available resources, as well as the selection of documentation equipment and techniques, the use of consent forms, the development of products derived from documentary materials, and the organization and preservation of sound recordings, photographs and other materials generated through field research.

"Proper attention to planning is crucial for the success of any cultural-documentation project,"

says Taylor. "As well, if funds are needed to carry out a project, the presence of a clear, detailed and logical plan is very often a crucial factor in determining whether applications for grants are successful."

Taylor is the head of research and programs at the American Folklife Center at the Library of Congress, in Washington, D.C. His work includes planning and carrying out research projects and public

"Proper attention to planning is crucial..."

programs concerned with American, ethnic, regional, and occupational cultures.

Taylor's areas of specialization include field-research methodology, material culture, maritime culture, and occupational culture, and is proud of the fact that his field research and writing served as the

basis for the creation of the award-winning Winterton Boat Building and Community Museum, in Winterton, Trinity Bay, Newfoundland.

"Response to the workshop was overwhelming," says Dale Jarvis, ICH Development Officer for the province.



"It clearly shows that community organizations are interested in developing programs for documenting living heritage, folklore and oral history."

Provincial ICH Needs Assessment

As a first step in fulfilling its ICH programme, the Heritage Foundation of Newfoundland and Labrador (HFNL) has recently completed a province-wide needs assessment survey to find out what communities require to help them safeguard their own living heritage.



The survey used was developed collaboratively then entered into “Survey Monkey,” a free on-line survey server. A link directly to the survey was placed on HFNL’s homepage and the survey was advertised widely via various member email lists.

Barbara Gravinese, a Memorial University, Department of Folklore Graduate Student, conducted the phone component of the survey.

The survey consisted of three sections with from three to six questions each, and took from ten to twenty-five minutes each. Open-ended questions were provided to encourage respondents to use their own words.

Every effort was made to reflect the province’s ethnic and religious diversity including new immigrant organizations. Care was taken to reflect the expansive geography of the province and all regions of Newfoundland and Labrador are represented in this report.

Respondents totaled one hundred-two (102) people with fewer than 20% taking the on-line survey

independently.

Almost all respondents expressed an interest in ICH training in standards and practices for recording and documenting their community’s ICH.

Most of those said they would be interested in a half-day “what is ICH workshop,” for themselves or



Recognition, education and training were three key needs identified in the survey.

other organization or community members, and a two-day introduction to conducting ICH or folklore fieldwork for themselves and others.

In her final report on the survey,

Gravinese made the following three recommendations, based on survey results and conversations with respondents:

- (1) Recognition awards for community members who are identifying and safeguarding ICH;
- (2) Support of community performance and traditional crafts programming in educational settings; and
- (3) An on-going, cross-disciplinary, multi-tiered ICH training program, to include K-12 teacher training.

“Many people are excited about becoming active members of this initiative on a grassroots level,” says Gravinese, who is writing her doctoral thesis on pottery, a contemporary tradition in Newfoundland and Labrador.

“We would like to know who might be interested in training, on lots of different levels, to do fieldwork recording, filming, and/or interviewing tradition bearers to document their lives and skills.”

Survey results will be placed online at www.heritagefoundation.ca



Remembering Christmas Traditions in Newfoundland and Labrador

Christmas is possibly the holiday most associated with the sharing of family and community memories. For those of you in the area serviced by Eastlink Cable on the Avalon Peninsula, keep your eyes open for their "Music and Memories" Christmas special. Folklorist Dale Jarvis will speak about his work safeguarding oral traditions, and will interview Mr John Davidge of Carbonear and Mr Peter Laracy of Cupids about Christmas memories, parish concerts and mummering traditions.

On behalf of the Provincial ICH Advisory Committee,

Season's Greetings

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The Heritage Foundation of Newfoundland and Labrador (HFNL) was established in 1984 to preserve the architectural heritage of the province. In 2008, HFNL was the organization chosen to lead and implement the province's Intangible Cultural Heritage Strategy, available online at www.heritagefoundation.ca.

Our mission is to safeguard and sustain the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Newfoundland and Labrador for present and future generations everywhere, as a vital part of the identities of Newfoundlanders and Labradorians, and as a valuable collection of unique knowledge and customs. This will be achieved through policies that support initiatives that will celebrate, record, disseminate and promote our living heritage and help to build bridges between diverse cultural groups within and outside Newfoundland and Labrador.